



This is for personal, noncommercial use only.

To search archives, visit  
[pressofatlanticcity.com/archives](http://pressofatlanticcity.com/archives)

## Richard Stockton College offers a dollar to take over NJN broadcasting

 Post this article for your Facebook friends



By JULIET FLETCHER Statehouse Bureau | Posted: Friday, October 15, 2010

New Jersey Network uses taxpayer funds as well as private donations and membership fees to deliver news and cultural programming around the state via five TV channels and a radio system with seven frequencies. But the network found itself the target of budget cuts this year. Under a state budget approved by lawmakers, the station received just \$1.98 million in funding, an amount equal to half the previous year's allocation and designed to run out in December.

By then, Christie hopes to find another willing operator.

Schulman said the station's mission as a public broadcaster was worth keeping intact, and might fit well at a college. "Beyond that, we believe this would be a marvelous thing for southern New Jersey, to have NJN based here."

Noting that New Jersey's northern counties often rely on New York-based stations, while southern counties watch stations based in Philadelphia, Schulman said, "This would be coverage originating right here, not from out-of-state."

Michael Drewniak, a spokesman for Christie, said he could not immediately confirm or deny that Christie's office had received Stockton's letter of interest.

Stockton's interest comes as lawmakers submitted a report to Christie recommending how to help NJN and circulated the names of two other private entities Friday as possible contenders to take on part or all of the station's operation.

Ahead of a report of recommendations by a legislative task force into the station's future operation, two members of that taskforce said they had heard of possible interest from two potential partners: New York public broadcasters WNET, which might combine with NJN, or another college, Montclair State University, which is said to have an interest in working with NJN on the production side.

Representatives of neither organization could be reached Friday for comment.

Janice Selinger, acting director of NJN, said Friday that the station has had no direct dealings with either WNET or Montclair. She also said the station had not heard from Stockton about its proposal.

"We know they have not approached us directly," she said. "Beyond that, we're awaiting the governor's view of the recommendations, and we will see what options are there."

Stockton College has one strong connection to the broadcasting outlet: The stations operate their southern New Jersey bureau from a space right next to the college library.

Station executives have argued that finding a private investor or owner would first require the station to upgrade some of its equipment. However, the network has also hit hard financial times,

according to testimony heard at Stockton College last month on NJN's future.

Dudley Burdge, a union representative, testified that the Foundation for New Jersey Public Broadcasting, the nonprofit fundraising arm, typically has raised \$9 million to \$10 million per year. But in 2009, that amount came to \$6 million and fell to just \$2 million in the first six months of 2010.

In the most recent public tax filing, dated June 2008, the network's existing fundraising foundation had \$10.2 million in expenses, but reported only \$8.9 million in revenue.

Those financial concerns were addressed Friday, as task force members sent recommendations to Christie on Friday night in a report that charts the broadcaster's possible future.

The bipartisan group, which included state Sen. Jeff Van Drew, D-Cape May Cumberland, Atlantic, and Assemblyman John Amodeo, R-Atlantic, recommended to Christie that the station receive enough minimal funding to keep it in operation until its broadcasting license can be transferred or sold.

Despite Christie's wishes to see the station sold by the end of 2010, when state funding runs out, members of both parties who served on the legislative task force said Friday that the station needed a grace period, during which its service would operate at a minimal level.

Assembly Democrats were said to have disagreed with the recommendations, and inserted their own addendum.

Since state law gives no entity the power to inventory the broadcasting authority's assets, the task force said the Legislature should create such an entity, with the power also to negotiate with federal entities, and receive, negotiate and approve any proposal to transfer the state's television and radio licenses.

That new group would determine what entity, or entities, is best equipped to take over New Jersey's main source of media, lawmakers concluded.

On Friday late afternoon, Christie's spokesman welcomed the task force's report.

"The legislative task force recommendations are positive and in line with the administration's proposal for the conversion of NJN from a government entity to an independent broadcast outlet," Drewniak said.

"We will continue to work with the legislature to make the NJN transition and complete the transfer of assets and license to an entity which will carry on a Jersey-centric broadcast mission, but without state control or taxpayer subsidy."

Contact Juliet Fletcher:

609-292-4935

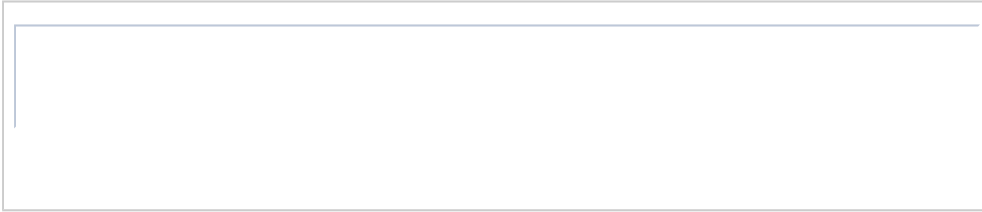
JFletcher@pressofac.com

## **Story Commenting Notice**

PressofAtlanticCity.com is integrating Facebook into a new method for commenting on stories on the site. This feature allows you to easily share content and comments with your social network, and you will be able to see what your friends and other PressofAtlanticCity.com readers are

Like

Be the first of your friends to like this.



**Marques Johansson** Oct 18

Give NJN to Stockton!

---

**Nils Kristian Hagen Jr** Oct 17

There are many voices who don't listen to nor are they members of public radio that have a lot to say about something they know little about.

NJN should be independent of the state and tax dollars, and depend more on private funds and membership but the transition should be done smoothly.

Mercer Community College is associated with an excellent station that broadcasts classical music. Temple Univ, and U of Penn in Philadelphia as well as Salisbury Univ. in Delaware also run public radio affiliates.

It seems that a good solution to get NJN independent of it's state funding and OPERATION would be to have it run by a college and financially dependent on means other than tax support like many other Public Radio/college cooperating stations are successfully operated.

It can't take place overnight like flicking a wall switch. NJN provides good programming that you won't see on commercial networks.

---

**Joe Magma** Oct 16

One buck is all its worth. Its about time NJ tax dollars are not being used to fund this liberal news channel. It was great watching this channel as the most recent NJ Gov voting results came in when Christie won. All the liberals on NJN were beside themselves.

---

**Fred Faceless** Oct 16

My offer is \$2.00!

---

**Mikelito Di Italiano** Oct 15

But we can afford wasting every tax payers' dollars trying to save the casinos in A.C.

---

**Kevin Taylor** Oct 15

That's "C'est la vie" my friend, or "Such is life" in English.

---

**Michael Straus** Oct 15

Say La Vee -- we can't afford it~ Say La Vee

---

© 1970-2010 Press of Atlantic City Media Group